

Message Text

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PAGE 01 QUITO 02622 230023Z
ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 DHA-02 L-03 H-02 DRC-01
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FM AMEMBASSY QUITO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4033

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AINF, CASC, EC (MISSING AMCITS)

1. ALTMAYER CONDUCTED FILMED INTERVIEWS APRIL 14 WITH AMBASSADOR
AND CONSUL.

2. AMBASSADOR'S INTERVIEW SHORT AND GENERAL. HE REPLIED TO
QUESTION ABOUT EMBASSY RESPONSIBILITY IN PROTECTION AND WELFARE
OF AMCITS ABROAD AND REFERRED BACK TO WASHINGTON (DEPARTMENT AND
CONGRESS) QUESTIONS ABOUT FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND FEASIBILITY
OF HAVING TRAINED INVESTIGATORS ON STAFF.

3. CONSUL'S INTERVIEW WHICH MUCH LONGER AND MORE DETAILED,
OPENED WITH QUESTION ABOUT DELAY IN NOTIFYING MR. BISSELL THAT
HIS DAUGHTER WAS MISSING. SEVERAL QUESTIONS WERE DEVOTED TO
BOHN, AMONG THEM ONE HINGING ON REPORT BY CAMILO LEON OF CONGEN,
GUAYAQUIL, THAT HE WAS TOLD BY FATHER PALOMINO THAT BOHN BURIED
AT 1700 HOURS ON OCTOBER 8, WHEREAS ALTMAYER HAD FOUR WITNESSES
WHO STATE THAT THE BODY OF BOHN, WHO DIED ON OCTOBER 7, WAS HELD
FOR TWO AND A HALF DAYS AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE EMBASSY
UNTIL THE
STENCH OF THE DECOMPOSING BODY FORCED BURIAL. "AND HOW DO YOU
EXPLAIN THAT DISCREPANCY?" ALTMAYER ASKED. THE DECOMPOSING
BODY IMAGERY WAS USED TWICE MORE BEFORE THAT QUESTION WAS
PUT ASIDE. AT ONE POINT ALTMAYER HELD A SMALL NOTEBOOK BEFORE
CAMERA STATING THAT THIS IS THE DIARY OF STEPHEN BOHN AND QUERIED
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CONSUL ABOUT IT. LATTER IN ALL TRUTHFULNESS HAD TO CONFESS
TOTAL IGNORANCE SINCE HE NOT AWARE OF POSSIBLE EXISTENCE SUCH
DIARY UNTIL RECENTLY. LATER ALTMAYER ADMITTED THAT WHILE NOTE-
BOOK NOT ACTUALLY BOHN'S DIARY, IT HAD BEEN HIS PROPERTY AND
CONTAINED SOME NAMES WHICH NBC WAS INVESTIGATING. A POSSIBLE
EXPLANATION FOR THE DIARY MUMBO-JUMBO DURING THE INTERVIEW,
SUGGESTED BY EMBASSY IO, IS THAT ALTMAYER BELIEVES THAT HE

WILL HAVE ACCESS EVENTUALLY TO A BOHN DIARY AND WANTED TO GET SOMETHING ON FILM ABOUT IT IN QUITO.

4. INTERVIEW TURNED TO BISSELL WITH ALTMAYER STATING THAT HE HAD INFORMATION INDICATING THAT POLICE SEARCH OF RIVER BANK CONSISTED OF DRIVING ALONG ROAD PARALLELING RIVER WITHOUT LEAVING AUTOMOBILE. HE THEN MADE POINT THAT CROUCH HAD NOT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY WELL QUESTIONED BY CONSUL WHEN SHE FIRST REPORTED BISSELL MISSING PARTICULARLY WITH REFERENCE TO JOHN WIKSTEN.

5. THE LITTLE ATTENTION GIVEN TO YODER/HERSCHBERGER CASE FOCUSED MAINLY ON QUESTION: WAS IT NOT TERRIBLY CALLOUS TO INFORM YODER FAMILY OF REPORT THAT DELILAH AND JIM HAD BEEN KILLED BY SHUARA INDIANS WHICH LATER PROVED UNTRUE?

6. BOTH AMBASSADOR AND CONSUL WERE ASKED IF THEY SATISFIED WITH INVESTIGATION BY ECUADOREAN POLICE. NEITHER REPLIED WITH A CATEGORICAL YES OR NO.

7. GIVEN THE CALIBER OF THE QUESTIONS ASKED AT THE INTERVIEWS AND HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH THE NBC TEAM, EMBASSY IO HAS IMPRESSION THAT ALTMAYER HAS NOT TURNED UP MUCH OF SUBSTANCE OF THIS STORY.
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